

# Climate Action Schools Impact report

2023 - 2024



# Our impact

Climate Action Schools supports and inspires action to combat climate change, tackle litter and waste, and create better places for nature, biodiversity and people. This report is a celebration of the achievements of children, young people and educators in schools and early years settings across Scotland during 2023 – 2024.

Here are some of the numbers:



**25,000**

litter picks carried out by  
Eco-Schools



**21,125**

pupils across all 32 local  
authorities attended live lessons



**6,992**

pupils have taken part in our  
Climate Ready Classrooms  
Primary or Secondary course



**1,160**

schools involved in at least one  
Climate Action School activity



**3,863**

people engaged with in  
person over the year



**83%**

of feedback respondents said  
that they carried out actions  
to protect or maintain existing  
natural spaces during the  
LEAF pilot programme



**50%**

year on year increase in schools  
successfully obtaining their first  
Eco-Schools Green Flag Award



**11**

organisations engaged to  
deliver 29 live lessons



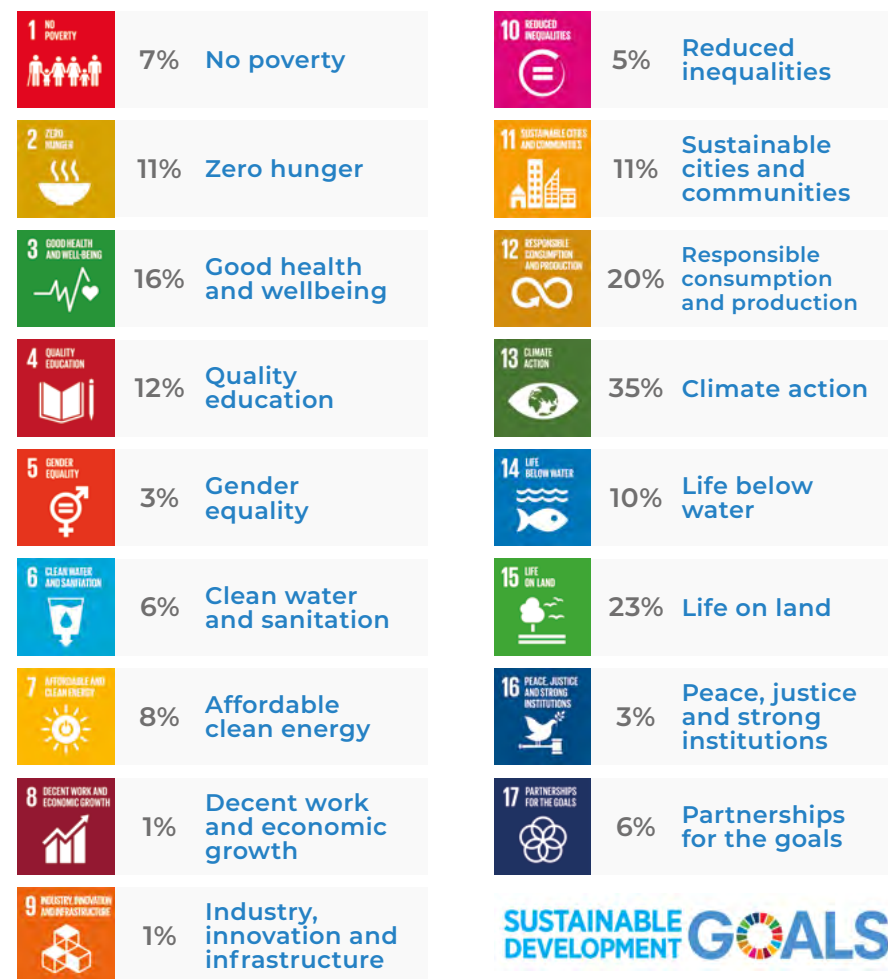


### Activities within the Climate Action Schools framework:

Activity	Learning for Sustainability	Climate Action	Biodiversity Loss	Litter and Pollution	Pupil Voice
Eco-Schools Scotland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning About Forests (LEAF)	✓	✓	✓		✓
Young Reporters for the Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Climate Ready Classrooms	✓	✓			✓
Live Lessons	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Professional Learning and Training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
One Planet Picnic	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pocket Garden	✓	✓	✓		✓
STEM the Flow	✓	✓		✓	✓
Wrigley Litter Less	✓			✓	

# Supporting the ambitions of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Every school taking part in Eco-Schools links their work to one or more of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# We have helped young people combat climate change by:

**Presenting** five Climate Action Week live lessons, showcasing how Scotland is transitioning to net zero by 2045. Over 4,700 young people from across the country joined in.

**Facilitating** a special Q&A session with Màiri McAllan, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy, giving pupils an opportunity to voice their questions and concerns about plans for the transition to net zero. 70 pupils attended in person with 500+ watching a livestream.

**Delivering** our Climate Ready Classrooms courses to 6,992 pupils across primary and secondary schools, providing them with information about the climate crisis focussing on solutions, actions and hope.

**Developing** our SCQF accredited Climate Emergency Training course to educate pupils about climate change and the positive difference they can make, and supporting secondary school teachers to deliver this.

**Supporting** all Eco-Schools to work on the mandatory Climate Action topic.

**Training** educators across the country to better understand sustainability issues and to help them increase opportunities for pupil voice.



*"It is so important that children and young people have their views heard and can ask tough questions about what adults are doing to tackle climate change."*

*"The questions asked [during the Climate Week Q&A] were thought provoking and underlined the importance of empowering pupils to take action and get involved."*

Màiri McAllan, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy,  
Net Zero and Energy

*"Ten years ago, when we applied for our first green flag this was a new adventure for all staff and children. [Now] not only has our nursery environment changed but the staff's knowledge, understanding and confidence in delivering learning for sustainability through our curriculum has increased and been enriched by our journey and the topics we have covered."*

Nursery school educator, Glasgow City

*"We know we can make changes and we feel more confident about tackling changes. We feel that we have an opportunity and a voice."*

Primary school pupil, Eilean Siar

# We have helped young people tackle litter and waste by:

**Asking** all Eco-Schools to carry out a compulsory litter pick – over 25,000 have taken place in the last 12 months.

**Hosting** a live lesson with ASH (taking Action on Smoking and Health) Scotland, discussing the impact of vapes on the environment and our health.

**Delivering** five live lessons during Spring Clean Week, including sessions focused on reducing waste from school canteens and classrooms, and asking pupils to adopt a place to look after and tell us what keeping that space litter free means to them.

**Focussing** on fast fashion during Sustainable Living Week including the global impacts of discarded and donated clothing.

**Celebrating** the efforts of young people taking part in the 2023 Litter League visiting 484 pupils at 7 schools and launching the 2024 Litter League.

**Encouraging** young people to take action on marine litter through the Upstream Battle® campaign including a Stem the Flow national and regional engineering competition, Source to Sea Week of Action, Marine Litter Art competition and school visits.



*“We have learnt that as a school and community we can achieve a lot. We learnt also that each pupil can make a difference and that together we have a vital role in tackling problems such as litter and climate change.”*

Primary school pupil, Eilean Siar

*“I saw some children from your school today out cleaning up the terrible mess in front of the local shops. I heard them say to each other ‘why would people throw this all away when there is a bin just over there?’ Thank you so much to your school for caring enough to help out the nearby area. Thank you for your efforts”*

Comment from local resident, Glasgow City

*“Other children always asked if they could help [with litter picks]. I can really see the difference in our playground and keeping a record of our work on display kept us focused. It’s easy to do so it is something we have just kept doing.”*

Primary school pupil, North Lanarkshire

# We have helped young people create better places for nature, biodiversity and people by:

**Rolling out** the Learning About Forests (LEAF) award programme encouraging young people to reconnect with their natural environment with 60 schools currently working towards an award.

**Developing** our Biodiversity Action SCQF accredited course to build awareness of what positive action pupils might take to address the causes of biodiversity loss, and supporting secondary school teachers to deliver this.

**Running** the Pocket Garden competition which received over 100 entries, from which 30 schools from 19 local authorities were invited to grow their gardens before a public vote.

**Engaging** pupils with Scotland's natural environment at a local and national level during Natural Scotland Week looking at folk tales, native animals, habitats and geology.

**Supporting** NatureScot in developing the Nature Discovery Map Scotland resource.

**Piloting** a new Eco-Schools Heritage topic with three schools and asking all schools taking part in Eco-Schools to have a community focus as part of their work.

**Enabling** pupils to share their concerns on global and local issues that they feel strongly about through entering the Young Reporters for the Environment competition.



***"It's fun being in nature, I felt happy."***

Primary school pupil, North Lanarkshire

***"Our pupils have loved all of these opportunities [to work with the community] and we find that pupils who maybe don't excel in academic work really thrive doing these kinds of projects. We find that pupils with challenging behaviour love having the freedom of outdoor spaces where they can be inquisitive and take things at their own pace."***

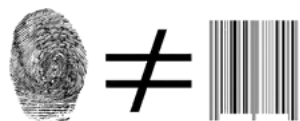
Primary school teacher, Glasgow City

***"I have learnt that taking care of our planet doesn't only mean helping to sustain the natural environment, but also means helping to ensure all people have equality [and a better standard of living]."***

High school pupil, Glasgow City



# Some of our partners this year





# Looking forward

In the coming year we are excited to develop further opportunities for pupil and teacher learning and action by:



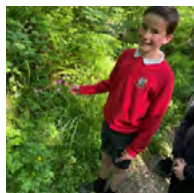
**Celebrating 30 years** of the Eco-Schools programme with a series of challenges for schools to take part in and encouraging schools to celebrate their successes and actions.



**Continuing to support educators** across Scotland to understand issues around climate action, biodiversity and litter through high quality live lessons, resources and training.



**Increasing participation** in the Young Reporters for the Environment competition giving young people a forum to have their voices heard on environmental issues that concern them.



**Growing the reach and number** of pupils educated on the climate and biodiversity emergencies through our programmes and SQA accredited courses including continuing to engage local authorities to deliver the Climate Ready Classrooms programme.



**Developing a progression pathway** of climate and biodiversity awareness resources that build from nursery/early years through to senior phase, incorporating our programs and developing additional materials at appropriate stages.



For more information on all of our programmes please visit [www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/cas](http://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org/cas)





We support the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is your charity for Scotland's environment. We work with you to help combat climate change, reduce litter and waste, restore nature and biodiversity and improve places. We aim to inspire changes in behaviour to improve our environment, the quality of people's lives, their wellbeing and the places that they care for.



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